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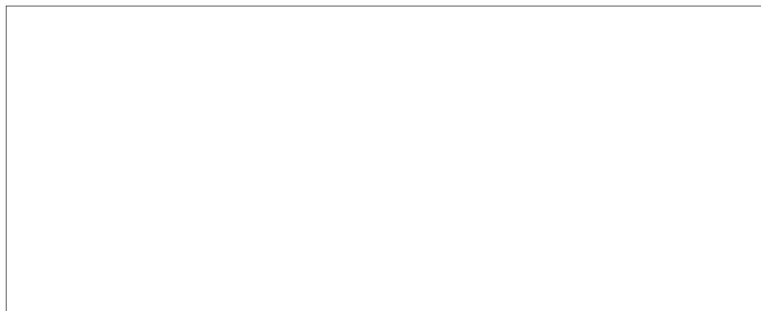
Monday, 19 July 1999

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*Analytic Perspective***Yel'tsin Family Tightening Control Over Media**

The creation in the past month of a Mass Media Ministry and ongoing shifts in the media market could reduce diversity in the media. The new Ministry will be headed by Mikhail Lesin, a Yel'tsin loyalist and able media manager.

- The Ministry will set policy for the mass media, advertising, computer networks, and satellite communications, and it will issue broadcast licenses, according to Russian press reports.

These efforts coincide with oligarch Berezovskiy's success in expanding his media holdings. He is an ally of the inner circle but could use his media to further his interests at the expense of the Kremlin's.

- Russian press reports say Berezovskiy earlier this year acquired control of the fourth-rated network TV-6 and early this month used a foreign purchaser as a front to buy the influential Kommersant publishing company.
- Press reports say he intends to buy *Izvestiya* and another influential Moscow paper from a financially ailing oligarch.

The financial difficulties of media magnate Gusinskiy—one media report says his holdings are \$1.3 billion in debt—suggest his empire is vulnerable to manipulation or takeover. According to a Moscow newspaper, Yel'tsin's daughter Tat'yana D'yachenko, Kremlin chief of staff Voloshin, and other insiders last month discussed stripping NTV—the independent television station with the second-largest audience—of its license.

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